

SH O R T M E T H O D
WITH
U N I V E R S A L I S M ;
ACCOMPLISHED BY SIMPLY PROVING THE
ABSOLUTE ETERNITY
OF THE WORDS
“EVERLASTING” AND “FOREVER,”
IN ALL CASES WHERE JOINED WITH EITHER THE
Old and New Testament,
PROMISES OR THREATENINGS
With the most positive Scripture Testimony.

By a former Universalist.

WRITTEN FOR AND PUBLISHED,
By a Friend of the Universalists.

New-York:
PRINTED BY HENRY SPEAR,
62 Wall-street, corner of Pearl.

—
1840.

SHORT METHOD WITH UNIVERSALISM.

In a short method of disposing of this momentous question, it will not be expedient, critically, to notice the words representing an endless duration, as found in their *various* connexions in the Bible, but simply to consider them as they stand connected with the *divine promises and threatnings*. There are understood to be two rules which have long been more or less popular in the interpretation of the words “*everlasting*” and “*forever*,” as joined with such promises and threatnings. Neither of them can be allowed as scriptural in the course now to be taken. The *first* of these rules considers such words as in all cases, figurative of a limited duration only, when joined with these threatnings. The *second* allows their figurative sense, when joined with the promises and threatnings of the Old Testament.

Instead of directly assailing Universalism itself, in this treatise, it is designed to wield “*the sword of the spirit*” against the loose principle involved in the above rules of interpreting the words “*everlasting*” and “*forever*,” both of which are agreed in giving them a mere figurative sense, as they stand connected with the Old Testament *promises*.

If this principle is utterly *false*, then its opposite is *true*, and these words are really and only *literal*, where the principle considers them *figurative*; and they must of course represent only an endless duration in this connexion, showing them to have the same meaning only, when joined with the divine threatnings generally; the eternity of both which, is always represented by the same words, in both connexions standing side by side with each other. This would completely settle the long disputed question concerning the endless future punishment of the wicked, without room for further argument. Although the principle of making these words

figurative of a limited duration as above, is popular in the church and sustained by our most approved commentaries : it will now be considered and repelled, even as a *dangerous heresy*, and as the *corner stone* in the fabric of *Universalism*.

In maintaining this position, it is proposed :

I. To examine and answer the supposed most weighty arguments which are presented in support of the theory, that the words, “*Everlasting*” and “*Forever*,” are frequently used with the divine promises, only as figures of a limited duration, and

II. To adduce more direct proof that these solemn words, when joined with the divine promises and *threatnings*, too, are *always literal* and represent only a period which is positively “*eternal*” or “*endless*.”

I. Opposite arguments are to be examined and answered.

1. The argument is presented that the word “*endless*” is no where in the Bible joined with the divine *threatnings*.

This is brought as a proof that the words “*everlasting*” and “*forever*” when so connected, cannot mean the same as the word “*endless*;” for if so, as the argument maintains, then the word “*endless*” *itself*, must have been also joined with the same *threatnings*. But why so ? Are not the words “*eternal*,” “*everlasting*,” “*forever*,” and many others of a similar import, which are attached to those *threatnings*, sufficient to prove their “*endless*” duration, without the addition of still more of the same meaning ? Are not these words altogether as significant of a ceaseless duration as the word “*endless*?” If the word “*endless*” had been frequently added to those *threatnings* and the word “*everlasting*” omitted, would not that circumstance have been a similar argument against the “*everlasting*” duration of an “*endless*” period ? And further, had the word “*endless*” been added, the others all retained, and as many more of similar import added, might not the argument in favor of their limited duration, remain still the same ; from the fact that the word *interminable*, or some other of the same meaning is no where joined with such *threatnings*, nor even in the Bible ? Surely this opposing argument, is similar in spirit to that of Christ’s

crucifiers, in their demanding the one further miracle only, of his coming “*down from the cross*” as necessary evidence for their belief in him as the Messiah.

2. It is brought as an argument against the uniform literal “*eternity*” of the word “*everlasting*,” that it is joined with the “*priesthood*” of “*Aaron*,” and maintained that in this connexion, it is *evidently* used only as a *figure* of a *limited* duration, long ago passed away.

To be sure, the “*priesthood*” of Aaron and his sons is called “*an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations*,” (Ex. 40: 15, Num. 25: 13.) But it is not now admitted that this holy priesthood was limited to Aaron and his *literal* “*sons*,” or “*seed after him*,” or that it is already passed away in a limited duration. Though Christ was not a *literal* descendant of Aaron the high priest, he is now certainly the “*Great High Priest, that has passed into the heavens*,” (Heb. 4: 14,) and although in Christ as a “*High Priest*” there is a “*change*” in the “*order*” of the “*priesthood*,” the *everlasting nature* of it surely continues the same in Christ, “*a priest forever*” in keeping it up. The “*necessity*” of this “*change*” in “*the priesthood*,” in the *rising* of “*another Priest*,” “*not to be called after the order of Aaron*,” the Holy Ghost tells us, was the want of “*perfection*” “*by the Levitical priesthood*,” (Heb. 7: 11. 12.) Unto this “*everlasting priesthood*” Christ was appointed, even before Aaron, and from an order ancient as Melchesidec, “*before Abraham was*.” (John 8: 58.) The order of this priesthood in Aaron was the outward show, or shadow of it till Christ’s incarnation, to show it more fully in himself. In the time appointed, he came as foretold, (Ps. 110: 4.) a “*Priest forever after the order of Melchesidec*,” (Heb 5: 6. 7; 17. 21,) Then as “*a faithful High Priest*,” (Heb. 2: 17,) in “*the bringing in of a better hope*,” (Heb. 7: 19,) “*of good things to come*,” (Heb. 9: 11,) he made his “*one offering*,” (Heb. 10: 14,) or “*the offering of his body once for all*,” (Heb. 10: 10,) on the cross, and is now “*set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven*,” (Heb. 8: 1,) where “*he ever liveth to make intercession for*” his saints ; (Heb. 7: 25,) and thus now, “*he hath an unchangeable priesthood*.” (Heb. 7:

24,) Hence it is plain that the “priesthood” while in the “order” of Aaron, which was to be “everlasting,” is yet continued in the “order” of Christ, the “Melchesidec” to whom “Abraham paid tythes” “our Lord” who “sprang out of Judah,” (Heb. 7 : 14,) and was not “after the order of Aaron.” “Our Lord” Christ, then is “he” the “Melchesidec” “of whom these things are spoken;” (Heb. 7 : 13, 14,) this being “the sum” of the whole, “We have such a High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man.” (Heb. 8 : 1, 2,) This “priesthood” then must be as truly and literally an “everlasting priesthood” as “our Lord” Christ, is the “Priest forever;” with now “an unchangeable priesthood.”

Again, all the saints, as the children of God, or spiritual seed of Christ, the “Great High Priest,” have the promise of being made, themselves “kings and priests unto God;” (Rev. 1 : 5, 6, 5 : 10,) of ruling “the nations [of God’s enemies] with a rod of iron,” (Rev. 2 : 26, 27.) of sitting “with” Christ, “in” his “throne,” (Rev. 3 : 21,) and of “reigning with him on the earth,” (Rev. 5 : 10,) or in the “new heavens and new earth,” (Isa. 65 : 17, 18, Rev. 21 : 2,) where they “shall reign for ever and ever,” (Rev. 22 : 5,) Here then, it may be seen, is a “priesthood,” of a “Great high Priest,” with all his spiritual sons, or seed after him, even as “a kingdom of Priests,” (Ex. 19 : 6.) which is to exist without change “forever.” This perfectly answers to that “everlasting priesthood,” of which Aaron and his sons were typical, as God has said of such things in the law and the prophets, that they were “a shadow of things to come.” (Col. 2 : 17.) Is not then, this “everlasting” literal, rather than a mere figure of a momentary duration?

3. Another opposing argument is, that the word “everlasting” is unquestionably used in a figurative and limited sense only where we read of “the everlasting hills.”

In answer to this, it may be said, that this small part of a sentence is usually quoted in the argument without another word of the connexion with it, as though without examination, we are bound to admit that those “hills” are merely

literal, and that this word “everlasting,” is but a *figure* of a moment’s space of time comparatively. But the position, bold as it is, will now be met and repelled, rather than admitted. Let us then, at once reverse it, and say that this “everlasting” is *literal*, and that these “hills” are *figurative*. The words are contained in Jacob’s dying address to the several tribes of his descendants, and are supposed to include even the present Israel of God. There he foretold them “that which” should “befal” them “in the last days,” (Gen. 49 : 1,) If these “days” are literally “the last days” and if the christian church “by faith” are “Abraham’s seed,” which the Holy Ghost hath said, (Gal. 3 : 7, 29,) and if the seed of Abraham and of Jacob, are one seed, then this prophecy of Jacob concerns all Israel, the church, or people of God, even to “the last days,” and “forever.” His particular words now in question, are contained in his blessing or promise foretold of “Joseph” as “a faithful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall,” (Gen. 49 : 22,) In this prediction concerning Joseph and his spiritual seed, or spreading “branches” from him as a vine, Jacob tells him among other things, of “the blessings” to be given him by “the Almighty God,” “the blessings of heaven above,” &c. (Gen. 49 : 25.) The next verse of Jacob’s blessing contains the questionable word “everlasting;” as follows:—“The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills,” (Gen. 49 : 26.)

Some of the reasons for maintaining that these “hills” are *figurative* of the “high and lofty” abodes, or “tabernacles” of God; and that this “everlasting” is *literal*, contrary to a long standing tradition of the fathers, will now be briefly given.

(1.) The passage containing the expression, “the everlasting hills,” is apparently converted into nonsense by supposing that these “hills” are *literal*, and to pass away with the earth. For if so, where, on the face of the earth, were their “utmost bounds” situated for the extension or limitation of Jacob’s worldly “blessings” to be inherited by his posterity? And in what sense did any “blessings” which Jacob ever inherited during the “hundred forty and seven years”

of his “*pilgrimage*,” (Gen. 47 : 9, 28,) in the land of his nativity, and in Egypt, ever “*prevail*” to those particular “*bounds?*” Or when did, or when will the worldly “*blessings*” of his literal seed ever thus extensively “*prevail?*”

(2) Its being said in the very next clause of the same sentence, that these “*blessings*” “*shall be on the head of Joseph and on*” his “*crown*,” is considered as clear testimony from God, that they are all to be inherited by “*Joseph like a flock*,” (Ps. 80, 1.) or by all the Israel of God, as his spiritual “*flock*,” (Ezek. 34 : 31,) in the heavenly state, where he has promised them every one, a blessed “*crown of righteousness*,” (2 Tim. 4 : 8,) or “*on their heads crowns of gold*,” (Rev. 4 : 4, see Rev. 2 : 10, 3 : 11.) Such “*blessings*” then and such “*hills*,” will be “*everlasting*” literally, and no figure of a moment.

(3) “*The last days*,” as already shewn connected with these “*blessings*” in the prophecy, are considered as proof that they belong to the heavenly state, and that they were *not* to be inherited by *all* the true seed, or “*flock*” of “*Joseph*” before the passing away of all the literal “*last days*” of the world, then these “*blessings*” and “*hills*,” are together, and literally “*everlasting*.”

(4) These “*blessings*” being called “*the blessings of heaven above*,” and “*blessings of the deep*,” seemingly shows their height and depth, or their exceeding greatness, such as “*eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor entered into the heart of man*” being such only as are “*everlasting*” truly with the *high “hills”* unto which they “*prevail*.”

(5) There are many parallel scriptures which show that these hills called “*everlasting*,” are themselves as high as heaven, and of course, literally “*everlasting*.” Such are the following and others,—“*I cried unto the lord with my voice and he heard me out of his holy hill*,” (Ps. 3 : 4,) “*Lord who shall abide in thy Tabernacle? or [a house not made with hands,]*” “*Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?*” (Ps. 15 : 1,) “*Let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles,*” (Ps. 43 : 3.) “*I will lift up my eyes to the hills whence cometh my help,*” (Ps. 121: 1.) Will not all admit that these “*tabernacles*” and “*hills*” of the Lord,

are heavenly and *literally* "everlasting," seeing that they are "*holy*" that they are the abode of the Most High, "*unto*" which the saints in worship are to "*lift up*" their "*eyes*," "*whence cometh*" their "*help*;" and where they desire to "*abide*?" And are not "*the utmost bounds of*" these "*hills*" the place unto which, "*the blessings*" of Jacob and his seed by faith, shall "*prevail*," rather than the Andes, Rocky Mountains, or other high places which are below the sun? Other passages represent the high and "*everlasting*" abodes of heaven, by a "*mountain*" or "*mountains*," such as "*The mountain of the Lord's house [or household] shall be established in the top of the mountains*" (Isa. 2 : 2,) "*They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain saith the Lord.*" (Isa. 65 : 25,) "*And I looked, and lo! a Lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand having his Father's name written in their foreheads.*" (Rev. 14 : 1.) These and a multitude of parallel passages are surely abundant testimony from the Holy Spirit who wrote them, that the word "*everlasting*," attached to such "*hills*," and to "*the blessings*" which "*prevail*" to their "*utmost bounds*," does *not* figuratively denote a mere moment's space of time, but rather that it *does* denote the *literal* "*eternity*" of the saints' "*rest*" in "*the high mountain*" "*into*" which they are to "*get up*," (Isa. 40 : 9,) or "*on the Mount Zion,*" where the heavenly hosts soon shall be seen by the universe, "*harping with their harps,*" and singing the "*new song*" which none can ever sing but "*the redeemed from the earth,*" (Rev. 14 : 2, 3,)

(4.) A further common argument against the uniform eternity of the words "*everlasting*" and "*forever*," is, that they are both joined with "*the land*" and "*possession*" of the divine promise to "*Abraham*" and his "*seed*," and supposed to be fulfilled in a *literal Canaan*, and *not* literally "*everlasting*."

The following are the passages of the promise;—"*And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee—the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession and I will be their God*," (Gen. 17 : 8,) "*And I will give this land to thy seed after thee, for an everlasting possession,*" (Gen. 48 : 4) "*All this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it forever.*" (Ex. 32 : 13,) It is

granted that this “Canaan” and “land” are a type of the real “possession” of the promises through Abraham ; but it is *not* granted as this argument seems to suppose ; that the “possession” itself is a wordly portion for a comparative moment of time : It will now be maintained rather that the “possession” is “heavenly,” and literally “everlasting ;” not to be fulfilled either in a *first* or *second* going into Palestine of the literal seed of Abraham ; but in the gift of an “everlasting” “Canaan” or “heavenly Jerusalem,” (Heb. 12 : 22,) “which is above,” (Gal. 4 : 26,) to Abraham, and to all true believers, who “are” “Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise.” (Gal. 3 : 7, 29.) Some reasons for this position will now be given.

(1) Abraham, though living in a literal Canaan when this “everlasting possession” was promised him, and though he “dwelled in the land of Canaan,” (Gen. 13 : 12,) during his remaining “pilgrimage,” with liberty to improve it with his “flocks” where he chose, (Gen. 13 : 8-12,) never *inherited* “it,” as he was to “inherit” the promised “possession.” (Gen. 15 : 7,) Stephen the first christian martyr, when filled with the Holy Ghost, affirmed that God “gave him none inheritance in it, no not so much as to set his foot on.” (Acts 7 : 5,)

(2) It appears that Abraham himself, in *looking* for his own promised “everlasting possession,” to “inherit it,” never *thought* that it was any thing short of the very “city” of God ; for the apostle by the Holy Ghost, has told us that “he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God.” (Heb. 11 : 10,) Had Abraham with his great faith, and knowledge of his own promise, understood it as given for a *literal* “Canaan,” why did he not “look” for it, rather than for such a “city” of “God?”

(3) “The seed” of Abraham, also having the *promise* of the same “everlasting possession,” who were to “inherit forever,” on coming “into the land of Canaan,”

[literally,] (Num. 34 : 2,) who actually went out of Egypt, and with Joshua entered in there, never inherited "it," for themselves; neither did their posterity; having been long ago, rather scattered from it to the four winds.

(4) While in a literal Canaan, Israel never dwelt "safely," as promised, and as the saints will, in "*a heavenly Jerusalem.*" "*And ye shall dwell in the land in safety.*" (Lev. 25 : 18,) "*Ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in the land safely.*" (Lev. 26 : 5,) They were rather continually beset with enemies while they dwelt there.

(5) They were promised a "*rest*" (Ex. 33 : 14, Deut. 3 : 20,) in the real "*possession*," which they never enjoyed in a *literal Canaan*, being rather in conflict with enemies, within and without, while there, as their history shows.

(6) "*If Jesus [Joshua] had given them rest, then would he not afterwards have spoken of another day.*" (Heb. 4 : 8,) This is an argument of the Holy Ghost, and it is conclusive. It shows, that if the going into a *literal Canaan* with Joshua, had fulfilled the promise, then the same promise would not afterwards have been repeated as though not fulfilled on going in there. Yet the same promises were continued to be made to Israel for a "*land*," and "*rest*," as well after going in, as before. (Isa. 14 : 3, Jer. 6 : 16, 30 : 10, Mi. 2 : 10, Mat. 11 : 28, 29,)

(7.) "*There remaineth therefore, a rest for the people of God.*"—"Let us labor therefore, to enter into that rest." (Heb. 4 : 9, 11,) This testimony of the Spirit also, is to the point. By it we are shown, that as the long promised "*land*" of "*rest*" was not given, on Israel's going with Joshua into a "*literal Canaan*," and has not since been fulfilled in any similar event, we may all, to the present day, be assured, that the very same promised "*possession*," or "*rest*" yet remains "*for the people of God,*" or for true believers, and that it will be for each one living to the end of the world, "*an everlasting possession*."

literally; as first promised “*to Abraham and his seed.*” (Gal. 3: 16,) It will be remembered here, that the unbelieving Jews, were not “*Abraham’s seed,*” as they boasted that they were; but were rather as Christ directly told them, “*of*” their “*father the devil,*” (John 8: 44.) But those, and only those are “*Abraham’s seed*” who have faith in Christ, as saith the spirit:—“*They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham,*”—“*If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise,*” (Gal. 3: 7, 29,) i.e. of the “*everlasting possession.*”

(8. The spirit of God by the same pen, continues his argument in favor of the “*everlasting possession,*” rather than a *limited* one for Abraham and his seed, in saying of the true saints, as an “*innumerable*” “*multitude,*”—“*as the stars of the sky,*” and as “*the sand which is by the sea shore*” springing from Abraham, that *they* “*all died in the faith, not having [previously] received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were pilgrims and strangers on the earth,*” (Heb. 11: 12, 13,) Why did they not as entitled to these promises by “*faith,*” receive them, or the “*possession*” promised, before they “*died,*” in a *worldly* “*possession,*” and especially those who lived and died in a *literal* “*Canaan,*” if indeed, such were the promise? The instruction is plain; those promises are *not* for a *literal* “*Canaan,*” but for a “*possession,*” which is “*everlasting*” *literally*, and which could not of course, be “*received*” in the present short life in “*carnal things.*” Neither can they be received while here, in *spiritual* blessings, or attainments of any kind, because they belong only to *eternity*, and can be received only on leaving the mere “*pilgrimage*” and “*tribulation*” of this world, to enter into “*a better country that is an heavenly.*” (Acts 14: 22, Heb. 11: 16,) Yet *here*, the saints should *embrace* these “*promises,*” though at present, they may seem “*afar off.*” And *here*, they should also receive, the fulness of the Holy Ghost, and thus joyfully “*press*” onward to the

"everlasting" "prize." (Phil. 3: 14.)

To make this important and disputed point still more plain, the inspired penman proceeds to speak particularly of the faith of *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses*; and a host of others living *after* the entering into a literal Canaan, who "*through faith*" endured the greatest imaginable trials and sufferings in the flesh, even to being "*sawn asunder*," instead of enjoying their promised "*possession*" of "*rest*" *here*; and says:—"These all having obtained a good report through faith, [having been faithful saints,] received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they [on earth,] without us, should not be made perfect," (Heb. 11: 39, 40,) i. e. God has provided a "*heavenly*" "*everlasting possession*" "*for us*" ALL, who have faith like theirs, which is even *infinitely* a "*better thing*" than to have "*received the promise*" in *this* world. Let us not say then, as some have, that God has "*provided some better thing for "US,"*" than for those faithful, martyr-like, and enduring saints, "*of whom the world was not worthy,*" (Heb. 11: 38,) Sure, "*God is no*" such "*respecter of persons*" as to give the "*better thing*" to grovelling and unstable mortals like "*US,*" of the present fallen age, if indeed supposed to be a "*respecter of persons*" at all, and to engross his people with promises of things to be enjoyed only in a momentary and suffering dispensation.

(9.) The *perfect harmony* of all the *Old* and *New* Testament promises of an "*everlasting possession*," for the faithful, is proof that the word "*everlasting*" here, is only *literal*, and represents the positive "*eternity*" of the "*possession*" promised. Let us next, briefly compare, and see the *harmony* of some of the "*everlasting*" things or "*blessings*" of the "*possession*."—"For all the land, [*"heavenly country,"* Heb. 11: 16,] which thou seest [by faith] to thee will I give it and to thy seed forever." (Gen. 13: 15,) "All this land that I have spoken of, will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it forever." (Ex. 32: 13,) "And thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth,

[new earth, Isa. 65 : 17, 18,] which the Lord thy God giveth thee forever." (Deut. 4 : 40,) "The Lord knoweth the days of the upright, and their inheritance shall be forever." (Ps. 37 : 18,) "They are preserved forever." (Ps. 37 : 28,) "The righteous shall inherit the Land," ["new heaven and a new earth," 2 Pet. 3 : 13,] "and dwell therein forever." (Ps. 37 : 29,) "Thy people shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land [heavenly country,] forever." (Isa. 60 : 21, see Rev. 21 : 1,) "And I will give this land, ["heavenly Jerusalem,"] to thy seed after thee, for an EVERLASTING possession." (Gen. 17 : 8, 48 : 4,) "Make to yourselves friends—that they may receive you into EVERLASTING habitations." ["mansions" above, John 14 : 2] (Luke 16 : 9,) "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth, shall awake, some to EVERLASTING life, &c." (Dan. 12 : 2,) "And shall inherit EVERLASTING life." (Mat. 19 : 29.) "But he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit, reap life EVERLASTING." (Gal. 6 : 8,) "And we [the saints,] shall reign on the [new] earth." (Rev. 5 : 10,) "And they shall reign FOREVER AND EVER." (Rev. 22 : 5,) "But the righteous ["shall go"] into life ETERNAL." (Mat. 25 : 46,) "He shall receive—in the world to come, ETERNAL life." (Mark 10 : 30.)

Can any thing be plainer from scripture, than that these several Old and New Testament promises to God's people through faith, are all for the same glorious final inheritance, and that the several terms by which its *eternity* is expressed, are in perfect *harmony* with each other, and that they are of course, in every case exclusively *literal*?

II. We are to adduce other more direct proof that the words—"everlasting" and "forever," when joined with the divine promises and threatenings too, are always *literal*, and represent only a period which is literally "*eternal*" or "*endless*."

I The original Hebrew terms, representing the words "*eternal*," "*everlasting*" and "*forever*," as they stand in English, (as acknowledged by our best authorities,) are precisely the same, when used in the connexion of "*everlasting priesthood*," "*everlasting hills*," "*everlasting possession*," "*inheritance forever*," &c. as when used in the connexion

of the “*everlasting God*,” “*eternal God*,” his “*throne forever and ever*,” &c. So the original Greek words of the New Testament for “*eternal*,” “*everlasting*” and “*forever*,” are allowed to be the same in all cases, joined with the threatenings, as well as with the promises of God. The contrary popular rule of giving to these awfully solemn words a duration equal to the duration of the *object* with which they are connected, which authorizes our giving them a *figurative* and *limited* sense, where we say the *object* of this connexion is “evidently” *not* endless, must not be applied here, because it is arbitrary in presumptuously setting up our own judgment above the positive, unqualified declaration of the Almighty : i. e. this rule would authorise us to *prejudge* the question, and to say when we please of the promises and threatenings annexed to these words, that they are *not really* “*everlasting*”. and “*forever*,” when the Lord himself expressly says that they *are* so ; and says it too, without any qualification in the connexion, or authority anywhere else in his word, for giving this *infinitely* different meaning to things which he represents as being “*eternal*,” “*everlasting*,” “*forever*,” &c.

2. It would *reproach* the *Almighty* as saying *great* and *solemn* things *without meaning* them, to represent him as joining the words “*everlasting*” and “*forever*” with his promises to the faithful, as though expressly calling the blessings promised *infinite* and *eternal*, while rather meaning by them, only those which are comparatively *trifling* and *momentary*, and most abundantly possessed by others without faith.

3. To say that the *Lord* uses these words *figuratively* to denote a mere moment’s space of time, reproachfully represents him as *trifling* with the awful realities of the future *state*, and as profaning *eternity itself*, in making it the type of a moment.

4. The precedent long adopted by many, of *spiritualising* the words “*everlasting*” and “*forever*,” or of making them mere *figures* of these fleeting moments ; directly authorizes the *perversion* of *all* the solemnities of the spiritual and eternal state, found in the Bible ; for if the Lord sets the example, or adopts the precedent of using “*eternity*” *itself*, as a *figure of time*, why not from the same rule, understand

the various *other* realities of the judgement, and future state, as *also* figurative of the events of time ?

5. The above example, or rule carried out, naturally explains the “*eternal life*” of saints and “*everlasting punishment*” of sinners, especially in the Old Testament, as matters of *this world* only ; and thus at once, destroys the spirituality of the whole book, and the power of its high and holy motives to awake, convert, and save lost men. This is contrary to the Spirit’s interpretation of his own words by the apostle, in saying,—“*We know that the Law, [word of God then written,] is spiritual.*” (Rom. 7 : 14,) “*The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword.*” (Heb 4 : 12,) So says Christ,—“*If they hear not Moses and the prophets, [Old Testament writings,] neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*” (Luke 16 : 31,) This is as much as to say, that the power, or motives of the Old Testament to awake and convert, is at least, equal to witnesses “*from the dead.*” And what has produced the present very general prevailing supposition that the Old Testament is nearly, if not wholly *silent* on the subject of a future state, of the final “*everlasting*” blessedness of “*heaven*” and of the “*eternal damnation*” “*of hell,*” if this principle carried out, of spiritualizing *eternity itself* into time, has not done it ? And what, but this precedent, has produced the present too general treatment of the Old Testament as a dead letter, and as destitute of the spirituality and awaking power, which are allowed to be contained in the New Testament.

6. This rule of *spiritualizing* “*everlasting*” things, or making them to prefigure the things of time and sense, always naturally strengthens “*the hands of evil doers,*” in saying to them “*peace, peace, when there is no peace,*” (Jer. 6 : 14,) and makes “*the heart of the righteous sad.*” (Ezek. 13 : 22,) This is directly the reverse of the spirit and command of the Old Testament to—“*Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him,*”—“*Woe to the wicked, it shall be ill with him.*” (Isa. 3 : 10, 11,) The principle effects this mischief of perverting “*the right ways of the Lord,*” in its converting the great mass of the glorious and “*everlasting*” promised “*blessings*” found in the Old Testament, into

mere things of the moment. These blessed promises truly expounded, and embraced by the spiritually minded, naturally strengthen their hands, and encourage their hearts, while "*strangers and pilgrims on the earth,*" passing "*through much tribulation,*" to "*enter into the kingdom of God.*" But in converting the saints' "*everlasting possession*" into momentary things, rather makes them "*sad,*" in its wresting from them their "*holy*" things, to give them "*unto dogs,*" and their "*pearls,*" to "*cast*" them "*before swine.*" The same rule of limiting the words "*everlasting*" and "*forever,*" casts a veil over the penal "*curses*" of the Old Testament, which are as literally "*everlasting*" as its blessed promises, thus hiding them from the sight of the wicked, causing them to say in their hearts, "*peace and safety,*" and to strengthen themselves in unbelief. And what could have operated more naturally than this precedent, to bring about the present "*sad*" and dreadfully depressed state of vital godliness in christendom? or the grevious departure of primitive christianity from the church? And what else could have more naturally strengthened "*the hands of evil doers,*" as at the present day, against the influence of God's word and Spirit, and their exaltation as with "*the man of sin,*" "*above all that is called God or that is worshipped?*"

7. Paul's declaration that he had continued "*saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come;*" (Acts 26: 22,) is further proof from God, of the literal eternity of the "*everlasting*" "*blessings,*" or "*possession,*" promised in the Old Testament, or writings of "*the prophets and Moses.*" This declaration was made in his own defence, when arraigned before "*King Agrippa*" on the charge of heresy. He had indeed continued "*preaching the kingdom of God.*" (Acts 20. 25, 28: 31,) the coming of the "*Lord himself,*" the *Great King*, "*with his mighty angels in flaming fire;*" (1 Thes. 4: 16, 2 Thes. 1: 7, 8,) The "*Life everlasting,*" (Rom. 6: 22, Gal. 6: 8,) for the saints, and the "*everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord,*" for the wicked. (2 Thes. 1: 9,) He had also dwelt largely on the doctrine of the "*resurrection,*" and other scenes of the final *judgement.* (1 Cor. 15: 12—58, Acts 17: 31, 32, Rom. 14: 9, 10.) It appears from his

writings and the history of him, that he was continually preaching these rousing doctrines from the time of his conversion till his “*departure* ;” so as to be *imprisoned, scourged stoned* and charged with turning “*the world upside down.*” And yet it was for “*saying none other things than*” he had found in the Old Testament. While then, he uses the word “*everlasting*” only in its *literal* sense, from the example of the Bible then extant, he virtually says, that this word and others of similar import, are always used in the *Old Testament*, only in the same literal sense, in showing the “*eternal*” duration of future rewards and punishments.

S. Our Saviour’s *example* in using the words “*everlasting*” and “*forever*,” always in a *literal* sense only, in his having come to “*establish*” “*the law*,” (Mat. 5: 17, 18,) is testimony from *him*, that the same words joined to the rewards and punishments revealed in the Old Testament, are always as *literal* as he made them. It is not admitted however by all, that Christ uses these words only in their *literal* sense, because some affirm that the “*everlasting fire*,” and “*everlasting punishment*,” with which he threatens those on his “*left hand*,” at his coming are *not* “*endless*.” (Mat. 25: 41, 46,) Such persons have said that Christ has himself taught their limited duration, by saying in the same connexion, “*This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.*” (Mat. 24: 34,) This opposite argument supposes the word “*generation*” here, to mean only that *age*; and that of course, Christ’s threatened punishment at his coming, was inflicted in that *age*, on the *Jews*, in the *destruction of Jerusalen* their city, forty years after. But it is not now granted, that the word “*generation*” in the passage, means that *age*, while it is maintained rather, that it means a *race*, a *lineage* or *genealogy*. Our dictionaries give the word this meaning among others. Christ but an apparent very short time before, and in the hearing of the same disciples, and on the same subject of his “*coming*” in “*the name of the Lord*,” (Mat. 23: 39,) had threatened his enemies, calling them “*serpents*,” and a “*generation of vipers*,” with “*the damnation of hell*.” (Mat. 23: 33.) Here he certainly uses the word “*generation*” *not* for an *age*, but for a *genealogy*, which included

the murderers of all the martyrs “*upon the earth*” from first to last, “*from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharias.*” &c. (Mat. 23: 35,) And would it not be unnatural for Christ to use the same word, on the same subject of his “*coming*” at “*the end of the world*,” (Mat. 24: 3,) in such an intimate connexion, and in two senses infinitely opposite. Besides it is admitted by our opponents that the destruction of Jerusalem was as late as forty years after Christ’s day; while an “*age*” is also admitted to be from 30 to 33 years, making that event then, from 7 to 10 years *too late* to be considered as fulfilled in *that age*. Farther, the history which is brought in proof that those solemn prophecies of Christ, were fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in that age, states no such fulfilment, but states simply the destruction of the city, with certain wonderful preceding appearances, but not answering to *these predictions*. (See Josephus and others on this question.) Should it be still affirmed that these things must have come to pass in that age, because Christ on another occasion said that some then “*standing there*” should “*not taste of death till*” seeing “*the son of man coming in his kingdom*,” (Mat. 16: 28,) it may be replied that the very next verse shows that the prophecy was fulfilled “*six days after*,” when “*Peter, James and John saw it all in vision, in the high mountain,*” where Christ was “*transfigured*” &c. Peter himself has thus explained it, after having seen “*his [Christ’s] Majesty in the holy mount.*” (2 Pet. 2: 16,) What then, has this to do with the destruction of Jerusalem, since it was fulfilled forty years before, as inspiration shows us?

More than this, the same word “*generation*” is found, in at least thirty other instances, in the New Testament, in each of which, the connexion is understood fairly to admit of interpreting it as a *genealogy*, rather than an *age*. That “*generation of vipers*” and “*serpents*,” then, is not yet passed away, and *will not be*, till Christ shall come “*in the clouds of heaven*,” (Mat. 24: 30, 31,) when every soul of them remaining alive, *will* pass away, in being

destroyed with the "damnation of hell," which they cannot "escape."

9. As a closing argument against this precedent of spiritualizing away the words "everlasting" and "forever" as they are found in the Old Testament, the fact may be assigned, that it lays the corner stone, and erects the principal pillar in the fabric of Universalism, or doctrine of *no future endless punishment*. For when once admitted according to this precedent, that the saints' promises in the Old Testament, for an "everlasting possession" to be *inherited and dwelt in forever*, &c. were only for a portion in the present world, how perfectly *natural and fair* it is by the same rule, for the advocates of that doctrine, to interpret *all* the penal and long enduring "curses" of the same connexion, as belonging to this life also. And from the same rule thus far applied, and with the apparent consent too, of the mass of our present approved expositions of "*Moses and the prophets*," how entirely rational it is, to conclude, that the New Testament, which is a transcript or paraphrase of the Old, must also be understood to use the same words "everlasting" and "forever" in the same figurative sense, denoting but a limited duration. And then of course, in the more full application of the same rule, in the same way, why should not the Universalist conclude that the "everlasting fire," and "everlasting punishment" of the wicked, threatened in the New Testament, will be as limited as the blessings and curses of the Old Testament have been so generally allowed to be? And why should he not *fairly* consider, from the same rule which is by others so fully applied to those scriptures, that the following awful realities foretold in the New Testament, are *only figurative* as to duration, and of course have nothing to do with "endless" "punishment?" such as:—

"Cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not and their fire is not quenched." (Mark 9: 43—48,) "Unquenchable fire." (Mat. 3: 12, Luke 3: 17,) "Everlasting destruction," (2 Thes. 1: 9,)

"Hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." (Mark 3: 29,) "Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." (Jude. 7 verse.) "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever." (Rev. 14: 11,) "And her smoke rose up forever and ever." (Rev. 19: 3,) "Cast into the lake of fire and brimstone—tormented day and night [perpetually] forever and ever." (Rev. 20: 10.)

And when we consider the infinitude of God's love towards man, the workmanship of his power, "fearfully and wonderfully made," why should not *all of us* naturally conclude, in carrying out this principle of limiting the duration of these declared interminable periods, that there is even greater reason for understanding them *all*, as limited in this instance and elsewhere when joined with the *threatenings*, than with the *promises*? Such an argument would be strengthened by the consideration that God "is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," (2 Pet. 3: 9,) and even would "have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth?" (1 Tim. 2: 4.)

These things being so, is it not a positive, though melancholy fact that the device of Universalism, flattering, deceitful and even "damnable" as it is, has been built and yet stands firmly on this corner stone, of spiritualizing away the "eternity" of the words "everlasting" and "forever," when joined with the Old Testament promises? Or how could that doctrine ever have arisen and stood as it has in a Christian community, except through the adoption of this precedent by the acknowledged witnesses of Christ, and the natural more full carrying of it out by others? Or how could it stand now, except as it does, on this basis? For let this be taken away and let the acknowledged expositors of the Bible at once agree in expounding the "everlasting" "blessings" in the Old Testament, as being in all cases *literally* "everlasting;" then what *other* so important a precedent of the church could be adopted and carried out in support of that doctrine. And then how could its advocates triumphantly and so *fairly* quote the popular expositions of the "orthodox" as they can, and *do* now, in their favor? And how would that doctrine be left at once unshielded, and fall before the "powerful" and "quick" "two edged sword" of

"the word of God," should that sword be thus skilfully handled? But with this precedent retained as it has been among us, of making "everlasting" things secular, and "eternity" itself a mere figure of time, how can we successfully, or consistently assail the superstructure, built by our own hands as it were, and yet shielded from our attacks, by our own traditions?

It may be said that this is making concessions favorable to Universalism; and not strange should certain advocates of that doctrine seize upon the remarks as though mightily in their favor; for thus are they doing with inspiration itself. But we make no such concessions; clearly proving rather, that the doctrine so called, most surely belongs to that class denominated by the Holy Ghost "damnable heresies" and "doctrines of devils." Yet it must be acknowledged, however others may construe our meaning that *heretofore*, we have made just such concessions in our admitting principles which do most naturally favor and uphold that heresy. In thus acknowledging our fault we can consistently recal those concessions and never again concede that the "everlasting" duration of the Old Testament-promised blessings, is frequently but the mere type of a moment.

Will not then, all classes holding any part of these now repudiated principles of interpreting the words "everlasting" and "forever," kindly, thoroughly, and fairly reconsider this momentous question? For surely the eternal all of innumerable multitudes is hanging directly on the manner of its decision.—From some cause it is certain that while this precedent has been followed out in the expositions of the law and the prophets, the church has fallen asleep as to her spirituality—renounced her "first love"—and departed from "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," while iniquity most terribly "abounds" and "the triumphing of the wicked," in making "void the law of God," it seems, was never at a greater height. And what other single precedent of the "witnesses" could more naturally and effectually have done it? And should there be a general and hearty putting of it away, in faithfully teaching the literal "eternity" of the divine promises and threatenings from first to last; which are annexed to the words everlasting

and forever, it is not easy to conceive what other change of any particular doctrine in the church would more readily and effectually prepare the way of the Lord, in the general outpouring of the spirit, and flying of the "angel" through "the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgement is come." Now indeed, is the time for us to be up, and doing our part as commanded in this great work. "The hour of" this "judgement" is rushing on, and the signs of the times proclaim it near. For ourselves as individuals, we know that it "is at hand," while the prophecies of "the last days" fulfilling—the astonishing approaching maturity of human "inventions," and improvements—the convulsive movements in the political and moral world, threatening a speedy and mighty explosion; together with long disregarded "fearful sights and great signs—from heaven"—"Blood, and fire and pillars of smoke," (Luke 21: 11, Joel 2: 30, Acts 2: 19,) all conspire in forcing upon our minds the conviction which is now quite generally acknowledged; that a TREMENDOUS REVOLUTION OR CRASH, of some kind, is "at hand." And what other mighty revolution in all the earth, foretold in scripture, can we look for "at hand" answering to all these signs so perfectly, as the coming of Christ "himself," and his kingdom to judgement?

SERIOUS READER:—

In view of these approaching infinite realities, it is no time to slumber—no time to indulge in idle speculations, nor to contend for our own or others preconceived opinions concerning them, or concerning the words representing their "eternal" duration. Be entreated rather, daily and deeply to study the holy scriptures, by faith,—by the indwelling of the spirit of God, and by earnest unceasing prayer, to know, and feel, and then do according to the requirements and "wondrous things" therein contained; and shun as thou wouldest the way to the pit, the practice believed to be now common, even with multitudes professing godliness, in spending at the best, less than one tenth part of the time

in truly studying the Bible which they spend in partaking of their daily bread for the body. Rather give the *soul* in this respect, at least an equal opportunity with the body, that thou mayest be as the righteous holding on his way and having clean hands to be stronger and stronger. Now is the accepted time to be fully prepared to meet thy God. Soon it will be too late. The Bridegroom will have come, and the door of mercy and hope will be finally closed against the unbeliever. Why not be persuaded then, more than ever before, whatever be thy hope or religious profession, to engage now *immediately*, and with *all thy heart and soul* in the love of God, and in doing "*with thy might what thy hands find to do*," in preparing the way of his coming, watching continually for the event, in full expectation of the "*crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous Judge*" "*in that day*" "*shall give*" "*unto all them that love his appearing.*"

THE END.